

CHARIVARIA.

WE cannot help thinking it is premature to blame Mr. LLOYD GEORGE for not devoting the balance on his Budget to the Sinking Fund. It is quite possible that its destination will be found after all to be a sinking fund for our enemies' battleships.

At Belfast, we are told, "Mr. Bonar Law, with bare head, faced the crowd." Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL, it will be remembered, did the same thing with bare face.

In reply to an enquiry as to the outlook for Home Rule, Mr. JOHN REDMOND stated, "The glass is still rising." The Suffragettes, however, who are still sore at the way the Irish voted on the Conciliation Bill, declare that the glass will be broken.

The next strike, we are told, is to be swift and sudden and is to bring the entire nation "on the knee." Unless, of course, the Government sees to it that it brings the strikers "across the knee."

The local Medical Officer of Health reports that he has ascertained that two girls suffering from measles recently attended a dance at Weybridge. We cannot understand why they were not spotted at the time.

A writer in *The Englishwoman* complains that men prefer silly women to clever ones. And yet, surely, it is just the clever ones who get men to marry them?

While the choral part of the service at Westminster Abbey was in progress last Sunday the congregation was startled by the yelping of a toy dog which had accompanied a lady worshipper. We believe this is not the first occasion on which a member of the canine race has visited the sacred edifice. Not so long ago a dog found his way in, having heard that some of the best bones in the country were to be found there.

The Seattle Board of Health, in order to trace the migratory movements of rats, has dyed a number of the rodents with variegated colours, and turned them loose. Some of them who were in mourning are said to be extremely angry, but others, we hear, are swaggering about in their gaudy coats and making excellent marriages.

A bar of soap was included in a burglar's booty from a house at St. Osyth, Essex. It is supposed that the ignorant fellow imagined it to be a valuable curio.

Mr. ROBERT CRICHTON, of Caterham, who celebrated his hundredth birthday

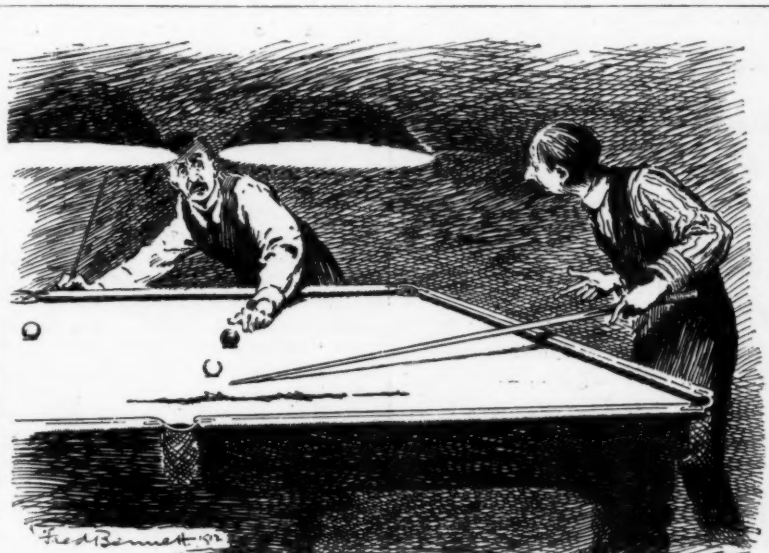
Recently published statistics show that for every girl brought before a criminal court there are sixteen boy prisoners. This just proves how much more clever the female sex is.

A letter to *The Daily Mail* complaining of the luggage delays at Charing Cross Station is signed "Leopold Cust." Whether this is a statement of fact or merely a signature we are not in a position to say.

TO JAMES BRAID.

Not at St. Andrews or at Deal,
When Open Champions test your steel,
Does the superbness of your play

Bring us our best enjoyment—
nay,
But, far away from vulgar view,
When you appear as partner to
Some gentleman of City fame
Who has a "fiver" on the game—
Some bulging emperor of finance
Who cultivates a crouching stance,
Square-legs his tee-shot every time
And leaves you stuck in swash and slime.
Then, as we marvel at the skill
That resurrects the clammy pill,
Are we (who play the worst of games)
Most coracious of your greatness, JAMES.



The Novice (who has cut his friend's cloth badly). "DEAR ME! WE CAN'T USE THIS MIDDLE POCKET NOW. WON'T THAT MEAN RATHER A STRAIN ON THE OTHER ONE?"

the other day, has, the newspapers inform us, never married. This statement, we should say, is calculated to put the spinsters of Great Britain on their mettle and to cause Mr. CRICHTON no little annoyance at a time when he no doubt craves for rest.

Immense damage has been caused by floods in West Ontario following a thaw which broke up the recently formed ice jams. Greedy little boys consider the destruction of the ice jams the greater disaster of the two.

"£10,000 BURGLARY

LOSS OF MEXICAN EX-MINISTER TO FRANCE"

Thus a contemporary. The French criminal classes seem to get more daring every day, though we are at a loss to imagine what use a Mexican Ex-Minister can be to a burglar.

From an interview with Miss HORNIMAN in *The Daily Dispatch*—

"We found that what was liked most was 'She Stoops to Conquer.' I am very glad indeed that was so, because as Sheridan is dead there are no royalties to pay."

This is the sort of argument that GOLDSMITH could never be made to see. Even when they told him that MILTON was dead he still clamoured for his money.

Fashions for the Bar.

"Judges and barristers will still cling to their wigs, not without a tinge of egret when a heat-wave pays us a visit."—*Statesman*.

"The date of Easter Sunday is worked out with great accuracy."—*Scotsman*.

It may not have struck our readers that an error of even twenty-four hours would be extremely inconvenient.

WANTED: A BOYCOTT.*(One more protest against field-posters and sky-signs.)*

Two things there are my spirit needs
To cure the city's killing blight—
Namely, the green of virgin meads
And "the large and thoughtful night."

Holy I count them, and the man
Who spoils their worship, impious brute,
On him I wish to place my ban
And the toe of my nailed boot.

And such is he who plants his bills
On Nature's carpet daisy-pied,
Crying aloud his instant pills
For the good of my inside;

And he, whose flaming letters prick
Across the stilly starlit sky,
Saying what beverage, well or sick,
It is best for me to buy.

And sooner would I perish thrice
Of any strange stomachic ill
Than once be doctored at the price
Of a sacrilegious pill.

And rather than with yon accursed
Consommé fill my vacant stoup,
I would elect to die of thirst
In a desert void of soup.

Who joins my boycott? who enrolls
His name against these vandal hordes
That blotch the dark with blatant scrolls
And the fields with blistering boards?

From whisky, pickles, drugs and tea,
Here advertised as angels' fare,
Who will refrain and live with me
On the same stuff found elsewhere?

Dumb is the Law; Art pleads in vain;
But, once we close our purses tight,
Green earth shall come to her own again
And the stars get back their night.

O. S.

MY RESEARCHES IN OCCULT SCIENCE.

FRIENDS have frequently counselled me to take up some hobby, if only as an occupation for my declining years, but it was not till quite lately that I adopted their advice. I decided to go in for Natural Magic, a choice at which I arrived by the merest chance. I happened to find on a second-hand book-stall a volume entitled, "MAGUS: a Complete System of Occult Philosophy." By FRANCIS BARRETT, Professor of Chemistry, the Cabala, &c. It was slightly out-of-date, having been published in 1801, but a cursory glance at its pages convinced me that it was full of practical information, and I have since learnt that it is still considered a standard authority on the subject. I acquired it for a few shillings, thinking that the study of Black Art would while away my solitary evenings pleasantly and not unprofitably. My earlier experiments were comparatively unambitious. I began on a toad. "So great is the fear of the toad," I was assured by Prof. BARRETT, "that, if he is placed directly before thee, and thou dost behold with an intensive furious look for a quarter of a hour, he dies; being fascinated by terror and astonishment." He adds that he has tried this himself,

with complete success. I purchased a toad from a naturalist for ninepence (which I suspect was over its market value), and glared at it with concentrated fury (with and without glasses) for at least fifty minutes. This, I admit, would have been open to the charge of inhumanity had it occasioned any acute suffering to the toad. But, as a matter of fact, the creature did not turn a hair! Obviously, it was not the right type of toad. However, the Professor put me on the way of procuring others which might be more suited for the purpose. "If," he declares, "a duck be baked in a pie and cut to pieces, and be put in a moist place under ground, toads are generated." It seemed a simple process, and I instructed my housekeeper to bake me a duck in a pie, which I duly cut in pieces. Only, as I occupy a top flat, the only land I possess is contained in my window-boxes, so I interred the portions of the duck in them, the soil being as moist as could possibly be desired. The result was in some respects disappointing—I obtained no toads. I fancy my housekeeper must have bought the wrong breed of duck.

There were one or two other experiments in "Magus" which are well within the scope of a beginner, such as this:—"The ink of a cuttlefish, being put into a lamp, makes blackmoors appear." I had a lamp, of course, and I dare say I could have ordered a cuttlefish from the fishmonger, but I didn't. Not that I have any prejudice whatever against persons of colour, but I have never gone out of my way to cultivate their society. Again, according to Prof. BARRETT, I might have "raised showers and lightning" by merely burning the liver of a chameleon on the house-top. But from this, too, I abstained. In such a climate as ours it struck me as superfluous. Or, if I had cared to burn the bones in the upper part of the throat of a hart, I could have "brought serpents together"—but unfortunately I happen to have an antipathy for snakes.

So I resolved to proceed to a more advanced grade, and summon up an Evil Spirit. "Magus" contains several authentic portraits of fiends, and I selected a demon of the sinister name of "Abaddon." He was by far the most appalling in appearance, and it is as well to do the thing thoroughly while you are about it.

Prof. BARRETT gives elaborate directions for raising every variety of Familiar by means of sacred pentacles, the compilation of a book of Evil Spirits, and what not. But they are a little difficult to follow, and I was relieved to find that, after all, he has another and an easier method. "If," he says, "a smooth, shining piece of steel be smeared over with the juice of mugwort, and be made to fume, it causes invoked spirits to appear."

This ingredient, however, was not procurable without some trouble. It seems that even Store Chemists do not stock mugwort juice; indeed, some were almost rude about it. But eventually I got some from a herbalist. A razor-blade provided me with the "smooth shining piece of steel," and upon this I squeezed a sufficient quantity of mugwort juice, while I invoked "Abaddon" repeatedly by name. I do not like to think that the herbalist was dishonest, but his mugwort most certainly did not fume, which is probably the reason why "Abaddon" never turned up. On the whole, perhaps, it was just as well, for I really don't know what on earth we should have found to say to one another if he had.

I was somewhat tempted after this to try my luck with the Philosopher's Stone, by the aid of which, as I gathered from "Magus," I might "transmute pints of impure metal into good and perfect gold." Prof. BARRETT, it appeared, had often done this himself, but there is a tantalising vagueness about his instructions. Not only should I require a crucible and a retort with a receiver, but "an



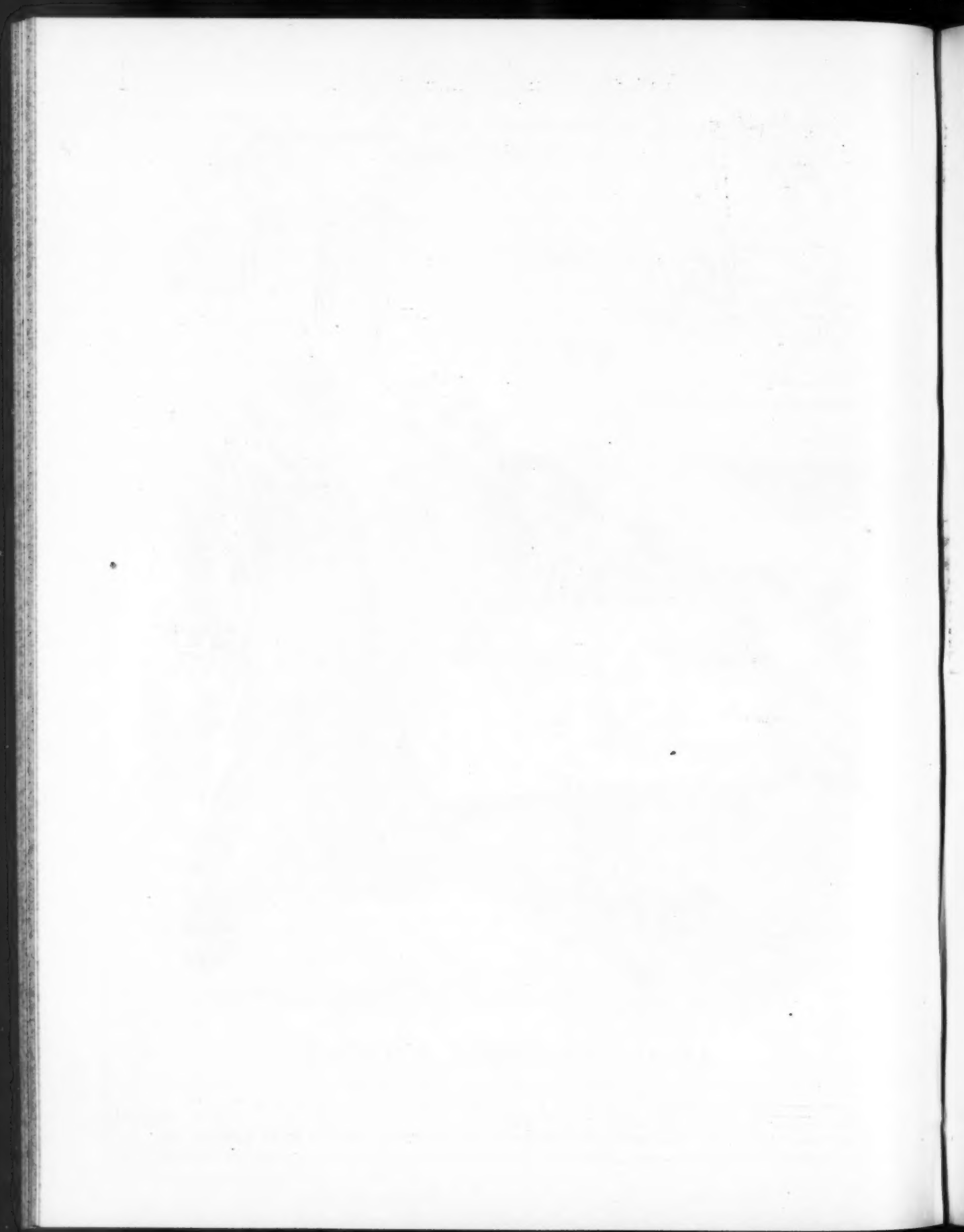
AN IRRESPONSIBLE OPTIMIST.

MR. PUNCH. "WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THIS LABOUR UNREST?"

JOHN BULL. "LABOUR UNREST! I THOUGHT IT WAS ALL OVER. I'VE GOT PLENTY OF COAL."

MR. PUNCH. "YES, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?"

JOHN BULL. "OH, THE GOVERNMENT WILL ENQUIRE INTO ALL THAT. THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE FOR."





MORE LABOUR UNREST.

First Employee (discussing the Principal). "IF YOU GET IN 'ER BAD BOOKS SHE 'AS GOT A SPITE."

Second Employee. "YES, IT DON'T MATTER WHAT YOU DO, YOU'VE DONE IT, ALTHOUGH IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU."

egg philosophical," and I have no idea what this may be—unless it is the sort of egg that is sold at twenty-four for a shilling.

But that was not the worst problem. Before even a start could be made, the Philosopher's Stone has to be found and its "first matter" extracted, as to which all the Professor says is this: "*Endeavour to find out in what part of thy composition is the 'prima materia' of the 'lapis philosophorum' . . . I say, thou shalt find it in thyself.*" Here the Author is mistaken. No one could have searched his composition more carefully than I did—but I never found my *prima materia*. It must have got mislaid somehow.

I was consoled, however, for this *contretemps* by discovering an even shorter cut to untold riches in the following passage: "*There is another trick yet more wonderful: if any one shall take images artificially painted, or written letters, and, on a clear night, set them against the beams of the full moon . . . another man that is privy to the thing at a long distance sees them in the very compass and circle of the moon.*"

It occurred to me at once that there might be money in this, so I wrote to a leading firm of soap manufacturers, requesting them to keep their eye on the next full moon between certain hours. Then I prepared a placard on which I painted the name of their soap in bold letters, and on the appointed evening I exposed this for the specified time to the moon-rays. My calculation, of course, was that the firm in question, on perceiving this novel form of advertisement, would offer me my own terms for the secret.

I was not surprised to see nothing on the moon's surface myself—that being the other people's job—but I was not a little disheartened by receiving no reply whatever from them!

So much so indeed that I have all but made up my mind to abandon Magic for some other hobby which will yield more tangible results. Collecting pictorial lids from Early-Victorian anchovy paste and pomatum pots, for example, I might do worse than try that.

F. A.

Commercial Candour.

From an advertisement:—

"Ask yourself: Do you look forward to your day's duties with pleasure? If you say 'Yes,' you may be sure that — is the ideal remedy."

"The late — left over £54,000. The net duties amount to about £94,000."—*Lancashire Daily Post*.

This is the sort of thing that makes Mr. LLOYD GEORGE so unpopular.

The House of Correction.

The satisfaction generally felt at the announcement in our columns (on the authority of *The Egyptian Gazette*) that Miss PANKHURST had "not been racked" has now received a rude shock, and the blow is dealt by no less a paper than *Keene's Bath Journal*, which announces that "Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence were admitted to boil." A bath journal speaks on this matter with authority, and we can only express our regret that such severe measures should be deemed necessary by the prosecution.

ARE BRITONS UNDERFERD?

MR. THOMAS THATCHER has written to *The Daily Mail* to express his view that, although it is quite possible to live on 3d. a day—he himself has often walked over forty miles in a day upon a fare of about 1½d.—the average human being does not eat and drink enough. "I feel sure," he concludes, "that if we lived better and more generously we should be far more contented and happy, healthier, stronger, better workers, better thinkers, and more kindly disposed towards one another." Mr. THATCHER'S inspiring utterance has met with a ready response from our constant readers, as the following selection of letters will abundantly show:—

DIET AND UNREST.

SIR,—MR. THATCHER'S brief epistle has given me more satisfaction than anything I have read for many years. How can we paint the map red unless we have an adequate supply of red corpuscles in our blood? And how can we have red corpuscles without a generous diet? When people say they can't afford it, I reply they *must* afford it.

The problem of industrial unrest will never be solved until the Black Country is supplied by the State with a full complement of expensive restaurants. The other day I saw that a gallant fellow had won a bet by eating ten penny buns and drinking five pints of beer in fifteen minutes. How much finer the achievement would have been had it been ten pounds of caviare and five bottles of Château Yquem!

Amphitryon Club. E. P. CURE.

A DINE-HARD PEER.

SIR,—MR. THATCHER'S noble appeal to Britons to adopt a more generous diet sets me thinking sadly on the exploits of the valiant trenchermen of yore. My maternal grandfather, Lord Rosstherne, was known by his friends as the "three-bottle and four-steak man," that being his habitual *quantum* at dinner. Even as a boy at Winchester he distinguished himself amongst his compeers by his Gargantuan appetite, the old porter having remarked of him that he was "hable to heat height heggs heasily," and on one occasion he "broke the record," as we say nowadays, by consuming 48 hot cross buns in 24 hours.

Lord Rosstherne, it may be added, was not one of those who "dig their graves with their teeth," for he lived to a ripe old age, and in his seventy-ninth year astonished JOWETT, with whom he had breakfasted, when I was an undergraduate at Balliol, by polishing off an entire ham. JOWETT himself, however, was a moderate eater, as I have mentioned in the fourth series of my *Oxford Reminiscences*, vol. iii., p. 1614, and seldom ventured on a second cup of coffee. It was SYDNEY SMITH, I think, who wondered what people did without tea. My grandfather never touched it, and to the day

that my poor lads are obliged to eke it out with surreptitious viands. Yet when I sent them a hamper containing a dozen of old port, several terrines of pâté, and so on, it was returned at once by their house master! I ought to add that neither of my boys has more than £10 pocket-money a term.

MIRIAM FLEISCHBERGHEIMER.
The Wattles, Hindhead.

GENIUS AND GRUB.

SIR,—I am entirely with Mr. THATCHER when he maintains that the average human being does not live well enough, or, to be more precise, does not eat and drink enough. But he discreetly refrains from stating *what* he should eat and drink. It seems to me that the most helpful solution of this problem would be to ascertain what is the daily diet of ten of our greatest men—say Sir HERBERT BEERBOHM TREE, Sir ALBROTH WRIGHT, HARRY LAUDER, Lord NORTHCLIFFE, Rev. C. SILVESTER HORNE, Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, Sir OLIVER LODGE, Mr. GRAHAM-WHITE, Mr. F. R. FOSTER, and Mr. HAROLD BEGBIE, and then draw up a sort of composite menu for the guidance of parents and guardians.

A. FLUDYER BOOLE.
The Skelligs, Maida Vale.

A POET'S SUGGESTION.

SIR,—As it has been represented to me that a contribution to your columns on this great subject would be welcome, I venture to send you a distich, in which I have, so to speak, distilled the experience of a long life spent on the watch-tower of wisdom:—

Unless our sons have four square meals per diem,
They cannot stand four-square when troubles try 'em.

Yours faithfully, A. A.

"AU BON MARCHÉ (French).—This means at the good, cheap market, Milfield Bridge, we furnish the home on easy terms. Ice on parley Francis."—*Adet*, in "*Sunderland Daily Echo*." The writer of this shows great restraint in not putting another " (French)" after his second effort, and explaining that it means "instalments payable in advance."

"The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and admitted having been convicted at Oxford Quarter Sessions on April 5th, 1910, of larceny."—*Oxford Journal*.

Even a thief has a right to be tried by his peers.



COMPROMISING.

SAD RESULT OF NEGLIGENCE ON THE PART OF ROBINSON'S WIFE TO TAKE OUT LAUNDRY MARKS FROM THAT GENTLEMAN'S WHITE WAISTCOAT.

of his death drank small beer at breakfast. I remember that JOWETT, with his characteristic thoughtfulness, sent me out to the "Mitre" for a tankard on the occasion I have mentioned.

Yours faithfully,
LEMUEL LONGMIRE.
Megatherium Club.

OUR UNDERFERD PUBLIC SCHOOL BOYS.

SIR,—I am grateful to Mr. THATCHER for bringing the question of the inadequate feeding of the upper classes to the front again, since it may help to ventilate the crying scandal of the diet of our public schools. As a patriotic British mother I have sent both my boys to one of our leading schools, the bare fees at which amount to about £200 a year. But the feeding is so inadequate

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

It is midnight, and I am returned home, depressed.

I have been dining out with the Rokeby-Rokebys, and I have the certain knowledge that I have fallen flat.

We diners-out have our ups and our downs. When we have an up, everything we wear fits, everything we do is right, and everything we say is bright. When we have a down, we arrive at the wrong moment, we do and say the wrong thing, our shirts bulge, and our ties veer to the left.

The Rokeby-Rokebys are of the Upper Ten. Charge them with so being, and they will confess to it frankly. I have even known them own up to it without being charged. By day, perhaps, Rokeby-Rokeby condescends to mix, for sordid and commercial reasons, with the common herd in the City. He even makes acquaintances among them, which it is necessary to entertain every now and then. These, however, he keeps for a separate and second night. He invites his peers for the first night, and I dare say he calls the subsequent gathering the "overflow meeting." At any rate I know there is to be such a gathering to-morrow night. But we are concerned for the moment with to-night's gathering.

I incline to think from their own admissions that the Rokeby-Rokebys are the Upper Two of the Upper Ten, and that the guests of the evening (myself excluded) were the remaining eight of that splendid corps. Why there should have been an eleventh at all, I cannot say. It is not, as far as I know, the usual practice to have a spare man at a dinner-party.

Anyhow, even supposing an eleventh was essential, no one could understand why that man should have been I. The other guests made no concealment of the fact that they could not understand it. They resented my presence. I am not sure that the Rokeby-Rokebys did not resent it too. I began to resent it myself. I took a supreme dislike to myself, because I was such a failure and no one loved me. Had there been a garden handy and worms in it, I would have gone there and eaten them. As it was, I had to content myself with salted almonds, and even with them I went wrong; or rather the almond went wrong, and there was, by way of a climax, a scene. . . .

I am at a loss, thinking it over at this moment, to decide upon the actual psychological cause of this dismal effect. When we fail socially it means that our *ego* is at fault. Either it is too active or it is not active enough.



Personal Friend. "I CAN'T 'ELP SMILIN' WHEN I LOOKS AT YOU, SAM. YOU'RE SUCH A UGLY BLIGHTER. 'AVEN'T YOUR KIDS NEVER TOLD YER OF IT?"

It may have been, with me, the former, and I may have been too conscious of myself. In the matter of shining socially, to think about it is to fail. Ask yourself "How am I getting on?" "Do I look well?" or "Am I being funny?" and the answer is bound to be in the negative. I may have been too anxious to achieve, too willing to please. My *ego* may have been too much concerned with itself, too much on the alert.

On the other hand, that same *ego* may have been not active enough. My real self may have been dormant; my personal magnetism may have been taking an evening off; my emotive

ambience, my transcendental essence, my primitive sensitiveness (speaking Futuristically) may have been closed for overhauling and repairs.

Hopeless of solving this problem and of coming to a decision, I turn idly to the Rokeby-Rokebys' invitation and read it again. Thereupon an idea occurs to me and I am faced with another problem, another matter to be decided. Shall I or shall I not go to their house and dine with them again to-morrow night? Shall I go to their overflow meeting and have another try? This time I might succeed, because then I shall, at any rate, have been invited.

THE REAL IRELAND.

(Or, Ireland From Within—the radius :
An example of what we may expect
during the next two years.)

[Our Special Correspondent who says he is in Ireland sends us this extraordinarily interesting account of an interview with a typical Irish peasant. With the introduction of the Home Rule Bill, English eyes are turned once more upon the Distressful Country (as it has been called). We can safely say that the true spirit of Ireland breathes more vividly in every line of our correspondent's sketch than in all the pages of the Blue-books, and that any Englishman who wishes to understand the problem clearly will do well to read and ponder this remarkable article.—EDITOR.]

BALLYBILGE, Friday. In my last three articles I described to you of England how I made the adventure of the Irish Channel; how I planted my foot for the first time on Erin's Green Isle; and how finally I travelled, in such primitive fashion as the country offers, to this remote corner of John Bull's Other Island. To-day I have to record how I talked heart to heart with the spirit of Erin, and how the great soul of the Celt has at last been laid bare to me.

It was a thirty-five-mile tramp over bog and potato-fields to the tumble-down hut of the Murphy O'Flahertys, but I was rewarded by finding Mrs. O'Flaherty at home. I produced my card.

"I am," I began, "the representative of—"

"Come in, y'r Honour," she cried, with the boundless hospitality of the Irishwoman all over the world. "The top uv the mhornin' to ye. An' it's glad I am to see y'r Riverince so hearty."

I should here mention for the understanding of your readers that I am in fact neither a judge of the County Court nor yet a benefited clergyman in holy orders. The Irish, however, are prone to picturesque exaggeration—a fact which should never be forgotten by those who seek to understand the Irish Problem.

"It is very kind of you," I said, "to welcome me so—"

"Sure, it's where will ye be sittin', glory be to goodness, and me with no chair to offer y'r Riverince!" she cried in dismay. "Bad cess to it, acushla, acushla!"

"You have a cold?" I enquired politely, in order to relieve her embarrassment. "Allow me to offer you one of these lozenges—they stop the sneezing at once."

"Faith, it's jhust on the ould pig I'll be puttin' ye, if y'r Honour will be pleased not to mind." She brushed some crumbs from the pig's back with the easy grace which is the birthright

of the humblest Irish woman, and I sat down. "It's used to ut is Biddy, more power to her."

"Well?" said I, wishing to show my acquaintance with the realities of Irish rural life. "And how are potatoes?"

"And it's meself is wishin' I had a dhrop of the crathur to offer y'r Riverince," she said wistfully.

The power of delicate suggestion latent in the Celtic race is a factor which will always have to be taken into account in any consideration of the Irish Problem. I drew out my flask and we pledged each other and Erin.

"Ghlory, hglory, hglory," she said in the musical Irish brogue which I have tried, I hope not unsuccessfully, to reproduce.

I looked at my watch and realised with a start that it was growing late; the thought of the thirty-five-mile tramp back weighed upon me. As yet I had not broached the question which I had come all this way to have answered. My difficulty had been to lead up to it tactfully; for it is just our Saxon lack of tact which has always prevented any real peace between the two countries. You in England can little realise the fine sensitiveness of this Irish nation; and, until you understand, the Irish Problem will never be solved.

But the psychological moment had now come. I seized it eagerly.

"And what," I said, "do you think of the Home Rule Bill?"

"Phwhat," she said, "do I think of ut?" There is a wonderful directness about these Irish.

"Yes," I said, "what do you think of it?"

It occurred to me suddenly that the special edition of your paper containing the full text of the Home Rule Bill, the photograph of Mr. ASQUITH, the snapshot of Mr. REDMOND and the history of previous Irish debates in tabular form had not yet reached her remote homestead. But this Ireland has a curious pride of its own. It is perhaps the keynote to the Irish Problem. Mrs. Murphy O'Flaherty was not going to expose her ignorance of the details of the Bill.

"And is ut thinkin' of ut I am at all, at all?" she asked cautiously.

What answer my Saxon mind would have made to this Celtic subtlety I cannot say, for at that moment a slight accident occurred. Biddy (which, as I have shown, was the cognomen of the pig) rose with a suddenness which is one of the most surprising features of the Irish character in action, and precipitated me to the floor.

"Arrah, be aisy now, ye spalpeen,"

cried my disconcerted hostess; "phwhat for wud ye be upsettin' his good Honour, ye black baste, and him wid a bottle of the blessed crathur upon him, the saints presarve him. Bad cess to ye!"

"No, no, my dear Mrs. Murphy O'Flaherty," I protested, as I rose to my feet. "I cannot have you calling your good animal a spalpeen. I assure you I am in no way hurt. I beg you to forgive her."

Reassured as to my safety, my hostess permitted the incident to sink into oblivion. This habit of forgetting is one of the most delightful characteristics of the Irish people. It is only less noticeable than their habit of remembering. Until our statesmen learn the simple fact that the Celt is a bundle of contradictory and apparently irreconcilable qualities they cannot begin to settle the Irish Problem.

"Well, Mrs. O'Flaherty," I said, holding out my hand to her, for in this remote country all social differences seem to be swept away by the Atlantic breezes, a fact which those who legislate for it would do well to remember—"well," I said, "I must be going. I have to get back to Ballybilge."

"Ballybilge is ut, be jabers," she said in surprise. "Glory be! The howly saints rhest yer sowl! Ut's no day for Ballybilge at all, at all."

Smiling at her obvious dismay, I took my stick—I had almost written shillelagh, so deeply does the Irish atmosphere bite into the soul—and made my way out.

And as I tramped the thirty-five miles home, over bog and potato-field, I marvelled at the blindness of you in England, I wondered at the Saxon stupidity which makes no effort to understand the subtlety of the Celt. And, knowing that for the first time in my life I had seen deep down into the throbbing heart of a country, I realised that my long journey to Ireland had not been in vain. *Erin-go-bragh!*

A. A. M.

Strikes and the Military.

From "Orders by Lt.-Genl. Sir D. HAIG, K.C.I.E., K.C.V.O., C.B., Commanding-in-Chief, Aldershot Command":—

"8.—Strikers, Q.F., 13 and 18 Pr.

To avoid serious damage to striker bodies, strikers should on no account whatever, for drill purposes or otherwise, be assembled on the gun without the firing pin being in place. Failure to observe this will quickly render a striker unserviceable."

Commercial Candour.

"The best is none too good" has always been the motto of the makers of — Bicycles."



THE BRILLIANTINE COMMITTEE OF A SMART WEST-END TOILET CLUB DISCUSSING THE MERITS OF A NEW HAIR-WASH.

RAPPROCHEMENT.

I LIVE at Welbeck, Ladysmith Avenue, Brickville, and Brown at Chatsworth in the same road. The two houses adjoin, and have each, as their names imply, a back garden. I think it was this fact which first caused our estrangement, for I keep a few prize poultry, and Brown keeps Scotch terriers, and the dividing hedge is unequal to the strain. However that may be, there is no doubt that a coolness sprang up between us. I do not mean that we were on openly unfriendly terms. On the contrary, when Chatsworth Charlie killed three of my best bantams, I was the first person to condole with Brown on the sudden death of the pup that evening, and in the same spirit he was good enough to present me over the hedge with all the plants that my hens had eradicated from his flower beds, together with a certain amount of *débris* to which I had not even that much claim. But we never really fraternized, and the mornings when either of us missed the train through the other fastening the catch of the

station gate at the last minute were always followed by some loss of cordiality in our relations.

The Brickville Poultry show is held in November, and early in October my wife suggested to me that a rapprochement with Brown was, in these times of peace and goodwill, my plain duty. She mentioned that, as Brown would be showing his terriers at Tunbridge about the same time, the selfish motives with which he is always actuated would be sure to make him welcome any overtures.

The situation was not without delicacy, but tact can do much. I advertised bantams for sale in *The Brickville Bulletin*, and whilst asking from enquirers a prohibitive price I was careful to explain that I was "declining poultry" in consequence of the annoyance they caused to neighbours. Three days later Thong the saddler stopped me in the street, on some transparently insufficient pretext, for the obvious purpose of informing me that Brown had called upon him to inquire when leather would be falling in price, as, except for the large outlay involved, he was anxious to

muzzle his three dogs. The next week I started a newspaper correspondence on the Duty of Courtesy to Fellow-travellers on Suburban Lines, and was pleased to see it continued by Brown in the same strain.

The times were evidently now ripe for our cook, acting upon instructions, to invite Brown's nurse-maid to tea in the kitchen. That apartment was tastefully decorated with flypapers for the occasion, shrimps were provided, and the utmost goodfellowship prevailed, the domestics being much pleased with each other's genial manners. Indeed, the only rift in the evening's harmony which came to my ears was the refusal of my knifeboy to have "Chatsworth" tattooed on his forearm with a skewer and the marking ink.

The next morning Brown missed his train through holding open the station-gate for me a moment too long, and in the compulsory wait thus thrust upon us we finally made up our differences and agreed to share the cost of a fence between our premises.

I took a first prize and two seconds at the poultry show. Brown was



He. "TERRIBLE BUSINESS THIS RAILWAY ACCIDENT. TWELVE KILLED."

She. "YES, SUCH A PITY; AND BY THEIR NAMES SOME QUITE NICE PEOPLE TOO!"

unsuccessful with his terriers, and gave this as a reason for immediately selling them; but my wife strongly asserts that his pleasure in them was gone when they could no longer harry our hens. She bitterly regrets the outlay upon the fence, saying that our bantams never went through the hedge, and that they are suffering now from the diminution of their run. I have positively forbidden her to interfere in any way with the palings; they are not strong, and will decay in time of themselves. Besides, only this morning I saw two of the bantams fly over.

The Plaint of an Anti-Suff.

While militants their hammers plied
I felt convinced our Cause was winning;
But now with WRIGHT upon our side
I feel less sinned against than sinning.

"A Paris banker has been arrested on charges of embezzlement and fraud. It appears that only £160 was found in his safe, whereas the sums entrusted to him are estimated at £160."
Liverpool Evening Express.

We should have let him off with a warning.

NATURAL SNOBBERY.

In London's West there stands a Square,
The home of rank and dross,
Whereof the goodly mansions wear
The gravest, most superior air
You ever came across;

A spot where dignity enjoys
Its just and noble peace,
Where nasty little whistling boys
Refrain from that indecent noise
Or go with the police.

The very milkman's voice is mute,
While, poised on muffled toes,
The wand'rer stills his ringing boot,
And e'en the taxi's vulgar hoot
More musically flows.

For whoso moves therein will feel
A spell, before he's done,
About his grovelling spirit steal
That bids him doff the tile and kneel—
I always do, for one.

This afternoon I took my way
Forth in a world of Spring;
The town was in its best array,
The very air was brave and gay
And fresh as anything.

I marked how blithely spread the scene,
How the bland sun looked down
On trees immaculately clean
In foliage of earliest green,
Unsmutted by the town.

At last I turned, that hallowed spot
In reverence to range,
And there discerned—I knew not
what—
Something that struck me like a shot
As different and strange.

The sparkling skies were just as bright,
The selfsame sun did glow;
No fewer leaves rejoiced the sight;
Yet somehow—somehow—this was
quite
A different kind of show.

I marvelled what the cause might be,
Till in a flash I saw
There was a dulness on the tree,
A grave decorum, which to me
Somehow suggested awe;

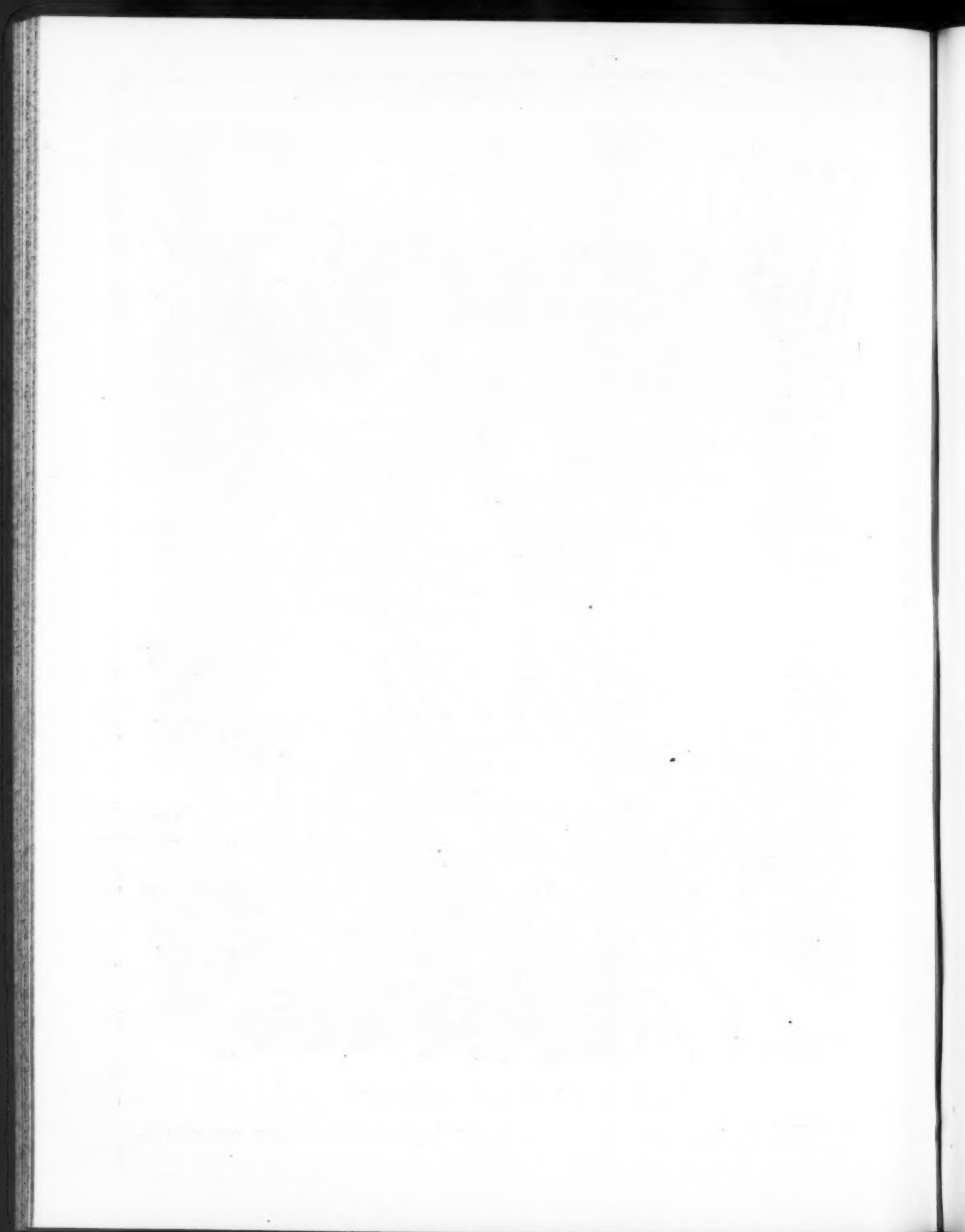
And then I knew, and I was glad;
For, with a sudden throb,
I felt that I was not so bad,
For Nature, too, was but a cad,
And Spring, like me, a snob.

DUM-DUM.



THE SLEEPLESS BEAUTY.

MR. ASQUITH (*the Fairy Prince*). "I DON'T SO MUCH MIND ALL THIS BRIAR STUFF; IT'S THE LADY AT THE END THAT MAKES ME NERVOUS."





OH, HOW WE ARE MISJUDGED!

Mr. REDMOND as seen by a perverted Saxon imagination all this time.

"Now, bhoys! we'll take all we can get and the rhest afterwards!"



Mr. REDMOND as he really is, or, shall we say, as he would wish to appear.

"My dee-ar friends! I can only express my feelings in the bee-utiful language of the P-rayer-Book!!"

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Commons, Wednesday, April 10.—Sittings resumed after so-called Easter holiday. Westminster boys show no disposition to return to school. Front Opposition Bench literally empty. BONNER and some of his chums been having a day out at Belfast. In acknowledgment of their patriotic service take French leave for extension of holiday. PREMIER also absent, preparing a few remarks on introducing Home Rule Bill. Majority of his colleagues, lacking same excuse, nevertheless follow his example. A few score unofficial Members scattered over Benches on both sides add to forlorn appearance of House.

Whilst Assembly is chilled by prospect of KEIR HARDIE maligning the Army, with CHIOZZA MONEY to follow in discourse on suggested establishment of Permanent Power Commission to deal with labour unrest, one faithful heart remains undaunted.



"JOSEPHUS REX."

"More than ever like one of TENNIEL's masterpieces."
(Mr. J. KING.)

Other Members may have sought whatever holiday joys Easter Monday provided on Hampstead Heath or by the grassy slopes of Greenwich. Inspired by its ecclesiastical associations JOSEPH KING has turned his powerful mind upon the alleged shortcomings—to be more precise, the unlawful takings—of the Bishop of BANGOR.

Of eighteen questions on the paper he contributes no fewer than four, being a trifle under twenty-five per cent. Severally and in the aggregate they deal with the Bishop, who is alleged to have "enclosed certain common lands in the parishes of Penrhos and Abererch." Is further charged with making similar raid on the Manor of Gogarth, Llandudno. What JOSEPHUS REX (looking more than ever like one of TENNIEL's masterpieces as he assumes the interrogative attitude) wants to know is, "How the rights over these lands will be affected by the Welsh Disestablishment Bill?"

HOME SECRETARY, jumbling the questions together, makes

reply which leaves upon mind of listeners uncomfortable impression that the Bishop of BANGOR has not in the past been all that was expected of him by the parishioners of Penrhos Abererch and Gogarth.

Business done.—Army Annual Bill read a third time. House counted out after an hour's discussion of CHIOZZA'S resolution.

Thursday.—As not infrequently happens when great expectations centre upon a particular event the reality itself falls far short of them. To-day set apart for introduction of Bill representing third attempt to settle Irish Home Rule problem. Papers full of subject in advance. Forecasts of the measure, contradictions and corrections, shouted in the streets. Belfast has had preliminary boil-over on its own account. GENERAL CARSON, K.C., with misty recollections of *Sim Tappertit* swearing in the "United Bull-Dogs," solemnly administered oath to fifty-thousand Ulster-men pledging them not to accept Home Rule "under any circumstances." Great rush for seats on floor of House and in Gallery over the Clock, whence the United States looked on in the person of its popular Ambassador, one of several plenipotentiaries from across the seas. Peers' Gallery full, but no block at head of stairway, as has sometimes been observed. Among Members late-comers, finding every seat appropriated, flock into side galleries.

A full House truly, but not comparable with the one that gathered on the same errand twenty-six years ago this very week. Then was seen a spectacle never visible before or since. Rows of closely packed chairs were set on floor, their occupants linking together and making one crowd of the throng seated on benches right and left of SPEAKER'S Chair.

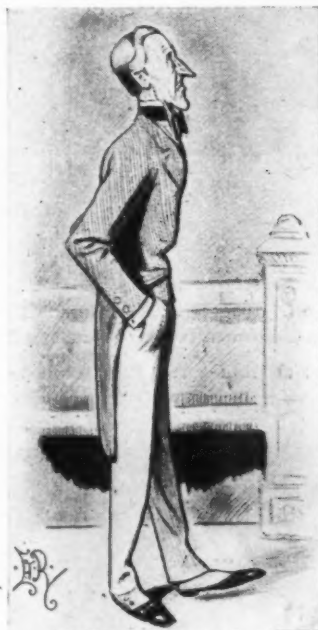
There was a roar of cheers when PREMIER entered, echoed from Opposition Benches when later BONNER hurried in and found ASQUITH already on his feet. Also Irish Nationalists cheered arrival of their chief. PRINCE ARTHUR entered unnoticed from behind the SPEAKER'S Chair, occupying a modest place low down on Front Opposition Bench. By instinct or accident chose the very seat GLADSTONE was accustomed to drop into when, after public renunciation of political ambition and purposes, he occasionally looked in during the Session of 1875.

PREMIER occupied two hours in delivery of speech, an exceptional extension of time. It was in the main a plain business statement, without effort to stir up passion. Once an

aside disclosed the fact that we were walking over thin encrustation covering molten mass of lava. It happened when PREMIER quoted passage from BONNER'S speech at Belfast in which he accused Government of selling the Constitution in order to purchase a few months' further hold on office.

"Will the Right Honourable Gentleman repeat that statement on the Floor of the House of Commons?"

Of course he would. Nothing delights BONNER more than such opportunity. PREMIER momentarily taken aback. Opposition frantically cheered.



"How the human back is capable of expressing insufferable boredom."

(Lord CASTLEREAGH strolls forth to the Lobby.) Captain CRAIG performed series of amazing gyrations. Storm fell as abruptly as it had burst, and PREMIER proceeded to peroration.

His style pellucid but not invigorating. Nor did GENERAL CARSON or JOHN REDMOND, who followed in succession, rouse to flights of enthusiasm an audience that dwindled as the former's speech was prolonged.

This strange unexpected condition of affairs due mainly to fact that each address had been carefully prepared, passages being read from visible sheets of manuscript. Even on momentous question you can't inflame the House by such methods. Beyond this circumstance was consciousness that the whole business was supererogatory. A pearl of wisdom incidentally dropped from lips of JOHN REDMOND.

"As a rule," he said, "First Reading

debates are more or less futile. One of the earliest reforms of procedure ought to be to abolish First Reading discussion." If that suggestion bear fruit, tonight's proceedings will be worth time spent upon them.

Business done.—PREMIER introduced Home Rule Bill.

House of Commons, Friday.—GODFREY SYKES, who designed the cover of the *Cornhill* and achieved even more important decorative work at South Kensington and elsewhere, held the theory that "people's backs are very expressive, and should not be neglected by the portrait painter." Thought of this just now when CASTLEREAGH, after sitting moodily on Bench below Gangway sacred to memory of GRANDOLPH and his merry men, lifted his tall head and strolled forth into the Lobby. Realised for first time how the human back is capable of expressing insufferable boredom. There were crinkles about the shoulder-blades, excrescences by the coat collar, a broad expanse of blank depression moulded by the waist, that spoke more eloquently than sighs or yawns or even impatient anathemas.

Truth to tell, House of Commons does not possess for Member for Maidstone the charm it weaves round some others. Things may brighten up a bit when we get into thick of fray round Home Rule Bill. Meanwhile, whether in the aggregate or in individual cases, things are dolefully dull. COUSIN HUGH pleases him not, nor WINTERTON either. HELMSLEY is occasionally chirpy; but what is he among so many? And then the sort of topics that bring grist to the mill of everlasting talk—Coal Strikes, six millions stored away for Naval contingencies, Conciliation Bills, the iniquities of LLOYD GEORGE and the shortcomings of the PREMIER—what thrice-boiled colewort is this!

Sitting dejected a full hour by Westminster clock, CASTLEREAGH suddenly springs to his feet and makes for the door. Spasm of activity exhausted by first movement. When he gets into stride motion becomes funereally slow. The seeing eye reads in expression of right shoulder-blade doubt whether he will live to reach the glass door. He does, and through it vanishes, grateful to breathe more invigorating air.

Business done.—Defeat of Cottage Homes for Aged Person's Bill.

"Belfast has no beautiful corners like the cities of Touraine."—*The Daily Chronicle* (Mr. Harold Begbie on "Orange Rule in Belfast.") In the same way experienced travellers report that they can trace no resemblance to Isola Bella (Lago Maggiore) in the Isle of Dogs.

IN LONDON.

Now upon the window sills
There are yellow daffodils,
There's tulip and there's hyacinth
each tasteful box adorning;
And our street, at times old-maidy,
Looks a gaily gown'd young lady,
So dainty and so *débutante* all on an
April morning!

Blue-and-white is all the sky,
And the clouds are driving high
(Around each windy corner how the
whistling gusts go shrilly!)
And the square is full of cooing,
For the wood-pigeons are wooing,
And there's sunshine on the pavement
all the way to Piccadilly!

See the sparrows wag their tails
On the newly painted rails,
Or they flutter at their nesting very
fussy, very faddy,
And there's taxi-cabs a-humming,
And there's fifeing and there's
drumming
When the Guards go by to barracks to
the bouncing "Hielan' Laddie!"

On the plane-tree's budding bough
There's the thrush who tells us how
He has found in spite of stucco that
the city sap is springing,
Tells us how to note the blisses
Of a morning such as this is,
And how April means adventure, and
how youth must go a-flinging!

And he tells us that it is
Just the day for Odysseys,
That high magic waits the rover who'll
put on his hat and risk it;
So to celebrate the season
It were surely no unreason
If we took the 'bus to Regent's Park
and gave the squirrels biscuit!

THE INSUFFERABLE.

It has been long admitted, with grief, that the blot on billiards is luck. By some inscrutable law luck never visits both players at the same time; by another, it never visits me at all when I am playing with one whom for purposes of concealment, not to say humour, I will here call Smith. Were all things equal (whatever that useful phrase means) I could give him twenty in a hundred; most of the men who beat him near the post I can beat with ease; and yet when he and I play together he runs out when I am about sixty. I say runs out, but the phrase is tame; gallops out.

The peculiarly annoying thing is that my game is based on scientific principles; his is a fortuitous assemblage of haphazard but successful strokes. I have more than a glimmering of where



Habitual Grumbler. "WAITER! THIS SANDWICH IS QUITE COLD."

the balls will be after a cannon; he has none. Yet when my cannon is made—when playing with him—the balls have so disposed themselves that nothing is left for me, while the reckless strokes of this horrid person leave him everything. I am aware that this experience at odd times is not rare; what is remarkable about it in my case is its persistence. Other men I am unlucky with and lucky with by fits; with Smith (as I choose to call him, he will know why) I am unlucky always.

I have a strong suspicion that he actually shuts his eyes when he plays; I am sure he breaks every law as to where he should place his body and his feet. My instructor (at several shillings an hour) gave me minute training in these matters, and I observe his wise counsels; Smith has never heard that a right and wrong exist. He places his left hand casually on the cloth; his cue shoots out, and instantly the balls begin to rush into pockets. Smith, in short, plays as if the cushions were $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and

the pockets constituted the remainder of the table.

"It is useless to try that," I say sometimes, in the light of my expensive training, "the angle is too narrow." "Is it?" says Smith, and does it. It is quite a common experience for him to put down all three balls. I have done it once—I am not proud of it; it was a fluke—but when I did it I got only 9 for it; Smith always gets 10. . . .

Last night we played again. I had been in great form for some days and spent part of the afternoon in practising; then he came with his infernal careless way and indifference to tactics and won easily. As we were covering the table he remarked pleasantly, "Do tell me—what does it feel like to lose at billiards?"

"The Irish Parliament could not alter the stamp duty relating to insurance and Stock Exchange transactions."—*Liverpool Echo*.

There is nothing an Irishman loves so much as exchanging sticks with an opponent.

AT THE PLAY.

"OTHELLO."

THE new and instructive method of disarmament by which an actor-manager replies to his critics before they have spoken (as well as immediately afterwards) relieves me of the obligation of defending the latest revival at His Majesty's. Otherwise I should have said that its scenic elaboration offered little disturbance to my intelligent interest in the play as a play. The crude story, however finely embroidered with noble language, does not give one to think—at least not furiously; and the early action of the plot moves anyhow so slowly that it suffers nothing from the delay caused by the set pageantry of the Court-house scene or the ballet diversion at the Cypriote watering-place. (This was, of course, before the days of seaside Pierrots, a fact sharply recalled by the presence of M. PÉLISSIER in one of the stage-boxes on a mission from the Potteries.) What delay occurred in the subsequent stages, when the action quickens, was due rather to the too-deliberate diction of one or two of the players than to the distractions of the scene.

On the night when I saw him, Sir HERBERT TREE was suffering from a sorry rheum which gravely affected his voice, and gave to his early utterances an air of remoteness and even boredom; and it was only by the greatest courage that he met the severe demands put upon him in the heavier scenes that followed. But, when every allowance is made for a temporary disability which must have modified the martial bearing of even the stoutest warrior, one may still say that it is a misfortune for Sir HERBERT that so many of the Shakspearean characters which he assumes—*Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Antony*—were soldiers to begin with before they took to tragedy; and it is the effect of circumstance upon this permanent quality of soldierliness that he finds easier to portray than the permanent quality itself. His *Moor*, at first sight, struck me as Messianic rather than militant, and my thoughts, neglecting his earrings and soft apparel, flew to JOHN THE BAPTIST. Yet, if *Othello* is one thing more than another, he is a man of war. "For I have served him," says *Montano*, "and the man commands like a full soldier."

True, we know little of his heroism except by report—and chiefly his own; for in the play itself he performs no feat of arms except suicide and the killing of a woman with a pillow. His well-boomed triumph over the Turkish navy (always unseaworthy even in those days) was due to the fact that



MR. LAURENCE IRVING, as a youthful ancient, takes off his coat and one shirt sleeve and enjoys himself thoroughly.

his ship weathered a terrific stage-storm, while the "Ottomites" went under. They never came into contact with him. Still, he was a soldier for all his drapery, and I doubt if I should have gathered this without the assistance of the words. I except one inspired moment when, having no lethal weapon of his own, *Othello* stole past the points of the guards' swords

under cover of his peroration and snatched the dagger from *Cassio's* sheath to stab himself withal.

MR. LAURENCE IRVING, as *Iago*, always arrested eye and ear with his least word or action. He was never a stage villain. But in avoiding the obvious things of tradition, he tended to be impish rather than devilish; and, though I give him credit for singeing an invisible moth in a candle-flame and spitting on his own ensign (incidents not allowed for in the book), yet the real venom of his inhumanity seldom emerged except in his brutal attitude to his wife. This part was played by Miss ALICE CRAWFORD, who spent a great deal of time on the stage doing nothing in particular and doing it well and unobtrusively. Her lovely Venetian dress was in sharp contrast to the dowdiness of the villainous "ancient;" and altogether I can't imagine why *Emilia* ever married him.

Miss NEILSON-TERRY played *Desdemona* with a fine grace and sincerity, but was apt to linger too long over the simplest phrases and, so, sometimes missed their spontaneity. On the other hand, in the last Act, she got off to sleep with extraordinary smartness, when one considers the trying time she had just gone through, and the fact that the limelight was playing right on her eyes. "Put out the light," says *Othello* a little later; but the limelight-man was deaf to his instructions.

MR. THESIGER's *Roderigo* was a pretty popinjay; and Mr. GEORGE was thoroughly sound as *Brabantio*; but the most satisfying figure of all was the *Cassio* of Mr. PHILIP MERIVALE, who looked delightful and played with a very perfect intuition for subtleties of gesture. The charm of Miss LAURA COWIE was, of course, wasted on the miserably thankless part of *Bianca*.

The chiaroscuro of Mr. CRAVEN's "Narrow Street" was very effective, and Mr. HARKER's Venetian scenes would have been for me a very dream of romance, only I always turn so nervous when a gondola gets loose on the stage. And I fear that Mr. LAURENCE IRVING will for the future share my uneasiness, for his gondola started off with him before he was ready for it (not having yet brought his punting implement into play), and, though he escaped actual immersion, he sustained a very nasty jar. O. S.



Sir HERBERT TREE (*Othello*). "She wakes!"

Miss NEILSON-TERRY (*Desdemona*). "Well, so would you, with a man reciting Shakspeare at your bedside and the limelight playing all over your face."



Annie (after the ceremony). "I MUSTN'T CALL YOU 'MISS' NOW, MA'AM, 'COS YOU'RE 'MA'AM' NOW, MISS."

"BILLY."

Some years ago there was a picture in this paper of a man, very ill, pointing over the side of a paddle-steamer and saying very feebly, "Stop the ship! I've dropped my teeth." It must have occurred to many people that there was the basis of a three-act play in this joke, and they will be glad to learn that after many years someone has at last been found to dramatise it. It is a little lavish, however, of Mr. GEORGE CAMERON to put the two ideas into one farce; the false teeth *motif* alone would have been sufficient for *Billy*, and then he might have given us afterwards another farce entirely about sea-sickness. But no doubt plenty of other ideas will come into his head—he could do something with cheese, for instance. Surely there is a three-act play to be got out of gorgonzola?

Poor Mr. A. E. MATTHEWS! He was *Billy*, and he had to spend three Acts looking for his teeth. He did his best to give an air of refinement to the evening, but even he couldn't prevent us shuddering. And Mr. ROBERT AVERELL and Miss VERA COBURN and other attractive people, all trying to be jolly on false teeth—poor dears, they must have wondered whether the whole thing wasn't a horrible nightmare from which presently they would wake.

However, *Billy* is preceded by *Her*

Point of View, which is the best one-act play I have seen for some time. It contains a real idea. In the circumstances I am particularly grateful to Mr. W. T. COLEBY; and he, no doubt, is particularly grateful to Mr. CAMERON. A dinner in which the sardine is the only thing worth eating is always a little disappointing, but such a dinner certainly shows up the *hors d'œuvre* in the best possible light. M.

"D. W. T."

I WROTE a fervid Ode to Spring
In SHELLEY's soaring strain;
Its haunting lilt and rhythmic swing
Would make an AUSTIN vain;
I rhapsodised of dell and fern,
Of bonny braes and banks;
And yet *The Pink 'Un* (by return)
Declined the gem With Thanks.

I wrote a truly British song
With DAGONET as guide;
The sentiment was hot and strong;
"We'll show 'em yet!" I cried.
The swinging chorus glowed with fire
(WEBSTER supplied the rhymes);
Alas! my patriotic lyre
Was wasted on *The Times*.

Still game, a stirring tale I told
Of piracy and wreck;
On casks of rum freebooters rolled,
Or strode the blood-stained deck;

I caught the mood of R. L. S.
(A daring thing to say);
But to my grief *The City Press*
Returned my yarn next day.

Concerning culinary tips
I penned the pithy par,
But 'How to devil orange pips'
Displeased *The Auto-Car*;
My hints of soaps for baby's tub,
For cleansing stains of beer,
Were, with an editorial snub,
Rejected by *The Sphere*.

At last, brain-weary of the strife,
By Grub Street dullards spurned,
I made the effort of my life—
Light verses neatly turned,
I conjured all my lyric art
To soften souls of flint;
And pity touched one gentle heart,
For here's my verse—in print!

PRESIDENT TAFT is reported as having committed himself to the statement that "the man that pulls the rope should hang by the rope." We have always held this opinion with regard to bell-ringers.

From a time-table:—

"London Bridge Passengers change at Streatham except those marked with an asterisk."
Never having liked Streatham we are being tattooed all over with stars.

IN PARIS.

(Communicated by an invader.)

We knew Paris was going to be great fun, but it has been greater fun than anything we thought, and we really have been enjoying ourselves immensely every day. Dad says we shall have to suffer for it somehow when we get home, but we don't mind that, because that kind of suffering generally doesn't happen, and anyhow there'll be the dear dogs and the cats at home, and they'll make up for a lot of suffering.

I don't mean to say anything about the journey except that we had a frightful hurry at Calais, and we liked the French railway carriages and the white houses with creepers painted all over them; and when we got to Paris we had to wait a long time in an omnibus while Dad was getting the luggage. But he came at last looking very hot and excited; he said he'd been in a street riot once and it was nothing to the *douane*. We didn't mind much because as soon as we got out of the station we saw a *cuirassier* with a long trail of hair floating from his helmet, and that was one of the things we'd all been looking out for ever since we left England. The *cuirassiers* look perfectly splendid, and Peggy has made up her mind to marry one and settle in Paris, only he must wear his uniform always and he'll have to learn to talk English.

Well, we got to the hotel and saw our rooms and had some supper, and after that I don't remember anything, and Rosie and Peggy don't either, but I suppose we went up in the lift, and Mum put us to bed because we were there all right the next morning when the waiter came in with the breakfast; but first we jumped out of bed and rushed to the window and looked out and said, "Hurrah! This is Paris," and then the waiter said something in French to us—but he's a German, I'm afraid—and we answered him in French, and he really understood us, so it is useful having French lessons. French breakfasts are a cup of coffee or chocolate and two rolls each, with butter. One roll is curly and soft and crumbly, and the other is straight and hard, and both are very good, but the soft one is the best. Then, when you've had your breakfast, you do your washing and dressing, and when you get downstairs you're ready to go out directly.

It was a beautiful day, and everything looked as if it had been washed and brushed and made very tidy, and there were great carts with six fat grey horses to draw them. The horses had short ears, and every now and then one of them put up his head and neighed just as if he felt very jolly and wanted to say Good morning to everybody, and the driver shouted out "*Hue*" and cracked his whip like a pistol. And there were motor-cars and taxis and four-wheeled cabs with very skinny horses, and the cabmen had shiny top hats, some black, some white; and the motor omnibuses came booming along at a tremendous rate. They've got a thing like a huge eye on their radiator and it looks as if it was glaring at you all the time. We ran over all the crossings, and Dad and Mum ran too. It was good fun after you had got over.

First of all we walked to the *Champs Elysées* where the great arch is. It's twice the size of the Marble Arch and much handsomer. Then we kept walking on till we got to the *Place de la Concorde* and the real streets, and Dad kept on showing us all the hotels he'd ever stopped at and the restaurants where he'd had good dinners ever so many years ago before we were born. He said it nearly made him cry to remember it all, and what was he going to do in Paris now he'd brought his family and couldn't go out to dinners and theatres as he used to? He said it all kept coming back to him like a beautiful dream, and he really

must have a dash one night before he went home, and be a happy bachelor once more. Peggy said she'd go with him.

We wandered about a good deal and saw some beautiful shops, and we all gave one another imaginary presents. I got a diamond tiara, and Rosie a pearl necklace, and Peggy chose five rings (diamonds, rubies and emeralds), and Mum had some bracelets and pendants worth about a thousand pounds. It's almost as good as really getting the things. Then at last we got to the *Louvre* (not the shop but the Gallery) and went in.

Of course we saw the Venus of Milo, and we loved her, though she hasn't got any arms, but her face is so kind and beautiful that you don't want to talk at all but just to look at her, and if you do say anything you say it in a whisper. After that we went through miles and miles of picture galleries, because we were looking for the picture of Mme. Vigée Le Brun and her daughter. We've seen a photograph of it, and that's one of the things we came to Paris to see. After we'd asked a good many times we suddenly saw it in the distance, and we all made a rush for it, and Dad said, "There's the darling," and we all stopped and gazed at her and her little girl, and then we tore ourselves away, and then we came back again and had another gaze. She died many years ago, but somehow you feel as if you had met her and knew her quite well. Aunt Mary says it's because of her mother-look, and that all good happy mothers look like that. So that's why we thought we recognised her.

I must stop now, because there's no more paper, but I want to say that we *are* enjoying ourselves, and the French people we talk to all have such pleasant faces and such jolly smiles that it's quite easy to get on with them, and when you can't quite say anything in French they always help you. And the *cuirassiers* keep on being splendid. One was at the hotel on Sunday and we spoke to him. He wasn't at all fierce.

A RUINED INDUSTRY.

[A French scientist says that the awakening of Nature in Spring is entirely due to the activity of sundry microbes.]

WHEN April's breeze 'gan whispering
And Winter's rigour broke I
Would hymn the buds and blooms of Spring,
Its onions and its croci;
Some lively lyric forth I'd pour
And then some solemn slow thing
(Starting, say, seven weeks before
I shed my winter clothing).

To pay such compliments to her
Had been my custom since I'd
First known the feelings Spring could stir
Within a poet's inside;
But now my heart has got an ache,
My lute a compound fracture,
For what one swallow cannot make
A germ can manufacture.

To think that, when the lambkins frisk
And all the world is joyous,
A mere bacillus makes them brisk—
My word, it *does* annoy us:
Starvation stares us in the face;
In vain we seek to choose a
Fresh theme to take the season's place—
Quo tendes, mea Musa?

"THREATENED SPLIT IN FIVE."—*Morning Post*.

This must be rather like the little rift within the lute.



LUCK.

First Coster. "WELL, PORE OLD BILL'S GONE."

Second Coster (scornfully). "PORE, INDEED! LUCKIEST BLOKE IN THE MARKET. COULDN'T TOUCH NUFFINK WIFOUT IT TURNED TO MONEY. INSURED 'IS 'OUSE—BURNED IN A MONTH. INSURED 'ISSELF AGIN ACCIDENTS—BROKE 'IS HARM FUST WEEK. JOINED THE BURIAL SOCIETY LAST TOOSDAY, AND NOW 'E'S 'OPPED IT. PORE OLD BILL, INDEED!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

PERHAPS it is less than fair to Mr. WILFRED HEMERY to suggest that a certain loose clumsiness of method in *The Woman Wonderful* (SIDGWICK AND JACKSON) has by accident contrived to produce a convincing study of an amiably drifting, feckless character; the success ought rather perhaps to be ascribed to conscious art. *Frank Brown's* sole inheritance is the knowledge, communicated to him on his mother's death, that his father, reputed dead and honourable, was really a defaulting solicitor and is probably alive. Chance drops our *Brown* into the Colonial service and a berth at Conradiesdorp, a South African township. A realistic, almost cinematographic presentment of a great many inconsiderable occurrences shows you a picture likely to give pause to the adventurous emigrant. For not the nethermost depths of Upper Tooting could hold such chances of devastating boredom as this life of a magistrate's clerk in the Dutch-English "society" of Conradiesdorp. Our hero recognises in one *Smith*, a hopelessly recidivist drunkard of the town, his own father, and the father, by a coloured woman, of a little blind boy who is killed by *Smith* during a fit of drunken heedlessness in the unsuspected presence of the other son. To this other son, deputy magistrate for the time, it falls to hold the inquest. The conflict between filial and civic duty provides the tragedy of the book, while not unskillfully through the

whole is woven the story of a love not the less intelligible because it is vacillating and unheroic. But when KIPLING made his pæan to "The Woman Wonderful" he had (we will wager our fountain pen) some vision far other than the South Africa of Conradiesdorp. Mr. HEMERY has written a first book of considerable promise.

What worried me about *A Lost Interest* (CONSTABLE) was that it contained such a crowd of characters that Mrs. GEORGE WEMYSS seemed hardly able to provide them with enough employment to go round. The result was that, when more and more persons kept flocking in and, finding apparently that they had nothing whatever to do with the very slender plot, wandered out again, I was left with some feeling of exasperation. Of course it may have been intentional. Perhaps it was because she also got muddled by meeting all these strangers that *Violet Egerton* began to lose interest in the young husband who had been called away from her to Central Africa after a few weeks of marriage. Then there was *Sir Everard Lang*, the mild villain of the story, who had arranged the husband's going, and whose personal interest in *Violet* lasted until she cried publicly when walking with him in the Park at the most fashionable hour. But when, in order to rescue her niece, old *Lady Blatherwake* (*Violet's* aunt) got herself farcically engaged to *Sir Everard*, I am afraid I must confess that my own interest was lost never to be recovered. I'm sorry, as I have before now derived great enjoyment from Mrs. WEMYSS's

writing, but there is no doubt that *A Lost Interest* bored me. This in spite of the fact that the characters, if superfluous, are often pleasant folk, and that the author's wit has by no means deserted her in describing them (as, for example, *Sir Everard*, whose facial mobility was such that "he could look in a shorter space of time sorrier than any other man of his age in London"). And the illustrations of those delightfully pretty people of whom Mr. BALLIOL SALMON has the secret are altogether charming.

Crumpled rose-leaves make uncomfortable bed-fellows, and dead flies, according to SOLOMON, cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour. But you can, after all, make *pot pourri* of the rose-leaves, and put the flies in their proper place, which is buns, and so make the best of a bad job. And that, more or less, is what happens in *The Fly in the Ointment* (CHAPMAN AND HALL), by FRANCES HAMMOND. At first I thought it was going to be a trivial account of some ordinary young people's lives, told as for school-girls. But as they grew up I found that the author had unsuspected strength and purpose, and, looking back on her story of a wealthy little lady with a sweet face and disposition but crooked shoulders, I see that it is good for me to have been shown how heavy a burden a deformity of this kind is for a "white" woman to bear. Also I have enjoyed the psychological interest of it all, the steady development of the woman in her uphill fight against the cruelties and contrariness of life, and the jealous spite and mischievous littleness of the straight-limbed young beauty who shared her home like a sister and made a hell of it. In fact, the savour of FRANCES HAMMOND's ointment likes me well.

Mr. ARTHUR H. HOLMES is a follower of Mr. HENRY JAMES not only in point of style but in disregard of all incidents save the psychological, and in the deliberate way in which he toys with an apparently trivial conversation. To tread in the footsteps of such a leader is no easy task, and I admire Mr. HOLMES's intrepidity and also its partial success. The fault I have to find with *Twinkle* (DUCKWORTH) is that its author requires me to be absorbed in the self-introspection of one particular character, the gentleman who gives his name to the book—has anyone really ever been called "Twinkle," I wonder?—whereas I would far sooner have followed the meditations of one of the others. Mr. *Jacob Twinkle* was a middle-aged, leisured country gentleman living in Cumberland, who suddenly came to the conclusion (which he immediately imparted in the solemnity of two chapters to his wife) that the best

principle for life was to "be yourself: accept nothing which you don't like: do nothing which doesn't advance you: and not be afraid of yourself, for you can't know anything better than the best of yourself." The story thereafter is concerned with the reaction of this theory or creed on Mr. *Jacob Twinkle's* family and environment, and more especially on the matter of his daughter's attachment to a young man of inferior social status—the son, to be precise, of a local jeweller. In the fortunes of these young people I was considerably interested; but though they did, I am pleased to say, bring off their match Mr. HOLMES or anything but the internal arrangements of Mr. *Jacob Twinkle's* mind, which began after a while to leave me cold. It was as if Mr. HOLMES continually sang to me—

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are,"
and by some appalling flaw of impoliteness I failed to share his astronomical curiosity.

When Mr. and Mrs. WILLIAMSON take from a convent a girl who is on the point of becoming a nun and waft her off without any companion to Monte Carlo, we may reasonably expect that exciting things are to follow. Add to this that *Mary Grant* was very beautiful, excessively unsophisticated, and wonderfully reckless, and you have about as much as even this pair of fluent writers can manage in their dashing story. *Mary* had the gambling lust in her blood, and although she was on her way to Florence she jumped out of the train at Monte Carlo as eagerly as any trout ever jumped at a fly. There (unlike most trouts) she nearly broke the bank, and also damaged a few hearts. Yet she remained sublimely innocent that she was doing anything to make people think her not altogether a "nice girl." If you can admit that

she could stay in such a delightfully guileless state, you will have no fault to find with *The Guests of Hercules* (METHUEN). Adventurers stream across the stage; people with systems and the usual lack of money are luring the unwary; the stick-at-nothing brigade are not unrepresented, and in the midst of this promiscuous crowd stands *Mary*, unsuspecting and unspotted. The authors have given a faithful picture of the life of Monte Carlo, of its glamour and its shallowness. That *Mary* found a few friends to protect her and a Prince (Italian) to marry, I cannot help regarding as rather a bit of luck.

"Mr. Lloyd George denies the statement of the London News Agency that he had taken Holmwood, Putney Hill."—*Press*.
It is like rare and refreshing fruit in these days to hear of something definite that Mr. LLOYD GEORGE has not taken.



NO, THIS IS NOT A THIEF, BUT A BRITISH VISITOR IN A SYDNEY HOTEL, FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS POSTED IN THE BEDROOM WHICH BID YOU LOCK YOUR DOOR AND TAKE ALL YOUR VALUABLES WITH YOU WHEN GOING TO THE BATH.